

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01
INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15
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/089 W

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R 241432Z JUL 78
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8857
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMCONSUL JERUSALEM
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BEIRUT 4176

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PINS, LE
SUBJ: BOMBS AT AN NAHR OFFICE

1. BEGIN UNCLASSIFIED. ACCORDING TO BEIRUT PRESS REPORTS, ON THE MORNING OF 19 JULY TWO BOMBS EXPLODED NEAR THE OFFICES OF THE INDEPENDENT AN NAHR NEWSPAPER IN THE HAMRA AREA OF WEST BEIRUT, INJURING A GARBAGE COLLECTOR AND SLIGHTLY DAMAGING THE NEWSPAPER OFFICES. A THIRD BOMB WAS FOUND AND DISARMED BEFORE IT COULD EXPLODE. (SEE JULY 19 AND 20 SIT-REPS).

2. ACCORDING TO THE MIDDLE EAST REPORTER (MER), THE GARBAGE COLLECTOR WAS SERIOUSLY INJURED "WHEN HE PULLED THE FUSE OUT OF WHAT LOOKED TO HIM LIKE AN ALARM CLOCK. THE DEVICE WAS DISCARDED IN A GARBAGE CAN AT THE BACK ENTRANCE OF THE NEWSPAPER OFFICES." MER ADDED THAT A "COLLEAGUE STANDING NEXT TO THE GARBAGEMAN WAS SLIGHTLY WOUNDED."

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3. THE TWO BOMBS WHICH EXPLODED CONTAINED THE EXPLOSIVE EQUIVALENT OF SIX KILOGRAMS OF TNT, ACCORDING TO L'ORIENT-LE JOUR, WHILE THE THIRD BOMB, WHICH WAS DEFUSED, CONTAINED THE EXPLOSIVE EQUIVALENT OF TWENTY KILOGRAMS OF TNT.

4. THE PUBLISHER OF AN NAHR IS LEBANON' AMBASSADOR TO THE

UNITED NATIONS, GHASSAN TUENI, WHO RECENTLY RETURNED TO BEIRUT. PRIME MINISTER SALIM AL-HOSS (ALSO INFORMATION MINISTER) VISITED THE NEWSPAPER OFFICERS AFTER THE EXPLOSIONS AND STRONGLY CONDEMNED THE INCIDENT. LEFTIST AS SAFIR ALSO DEPLORED THE INCIDENT AND STATED THAT "NOTHING MUST BE DONE TO IMPAIR THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS AND EXPRESSION IN WEST BEIRUT," MER REPORTED. END UNCLASSIFIED.

3. BEGIN CONFIDENTIAL. COMMENT: THE MOTIVES AND THE IDENTITIES OF THE PERPETRATORS REMAIN UNKNOWN. SPECULATION HAS RANGED FROM APOLITICAL EXTORTIONISTS, TO SYRIANS UNHAPPY WITH THE NEWSPAPER'S COVERAGE OF FIGHTING AT THE BEGINNING OF JULY, TO PHALANGISTS UNHAPPY FOR THE SAME REASON. AN NAHR MANAGER MARWAN HAMADI, HOWEVER, THINKS SYRIANS ARE MOST LIKELY CULPRITS. END COMMENT. END CONFIDENTIAL.
PARKER

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NNN

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Disposition Approved on Date:
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